

TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS: COERCION IN A TIME OF ECONOMIC CRISIS



"The human trafficking phenomenon affects virtually every country, including the United States. In acknowledging America's own struggle with modern-day slavery and slavery-related practices, we offer partnership. We call on every government to join us in working to build consensus and leverage resources to eliminate all forms of trafficking."

— Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton

The U.S. Department of State's 2009 *Trafficking in Persons (TIP)* Report was mandated by the U.S. Congress through the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000. The

annual Report seeks to increase global awareness of human trafficking, to highlight national and international efforts to combat it, and to encourage foreign governments to take action against all forms of modern-day slavery.

The past year, marked by the onset of a global financial crisis, has raised the specter of increased human trafficking around the world. Two concurrent trends – a shrinking global demand for labor and a growing supply of workers willing to take ever greater risks for economic opportunities – seem a recipe for greater forced labor of migrant workers and commercial sexual exploitation of women in prostitution.

Traffickers use force, fraud or coercion to exploit a person for profit, whether through labor exploitation – which claims the largest number of victims – or through commercial sexual exploitation.

Victims of Trafficking

(UN International Labor Organization Estimates)

- 12.3 million adults and children at any time, in forced labor and sexual servitude
- 1.39 million victims of sex trafficking, both national and transnational
- 56% of forced labor victims are women and girls

Major Forms of Trafficking in Persons

- Forced Labor
- Involuntary Domestic Servitude
- Sex Trafficking
- Child Sex Trafficking
- Bonded Labor
- Forced Child Labor
- Child Soldiers
- Debt Bondage Among Migrant Laborers

The 2009 TIP Report

The ninth annual TIP Report covers the period April 2008 to March 2009. The Report uses a four-tier ranking system to register improvement and decline in governments' efforts

to combat trafficking.

2009 Report Highlights

- Human trafficking is prevalent throughout the world, as shown by the Report's expanded coverage to 175 countries.
- Subtle but potent forms of coercion are often used against victims, including threats of deportation or imprisonment, or severe reputational and financial harm that make them feel they have no choice but to continue in service.
- Factors contributing to trafficking include fraudulent recruitment practices, excessive recruitment fees and debt, and lack of legal protections for migrants.
- There remains a stark disparity between the large global problem of forced labor and the low numbers of prosecutions and convictions of labor trafficking crimes (less than 10 percent of all convictions).
- The Department of Justice now releases an assessment of U.S. Government activities to combat trafficking in persons in tandem with the TIP Report.

TIP Successes

During the reporting period, 26 countries enacted new anti-trafficking legislation. More than half the world's countries now have enacted criminal legislation prohibiting all forms of trafficking in persons.